Preached July 14. 1776.

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Mrs. Sarah S. Spaulding

Nov 4, 1893

Psalm 118. 8, 9.

It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man.
It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in Princes.

King David, who, 'tis probable, was the Author of this Psalm, was a man of various fortune, had passed thro' many changes in life. But few have had greater experience of [illegible] of their different tempers, humours, & conduct than he had, nor therefore have been better qualified to form a proper judgement of men & to declare what trust & confidence may be properly put in them.
He knew what it was to have true & faithful friends, & to be deprived of such. He had been concerned likewise with some, who were hypocritical, deceitful and treacherous, who

2. while they pretended friendship, secretly plotted his ruine. He had had to do not only with the lower people, but with persons of high rank & [illegible] life, & had received injuries, as well as favors from both.
David had also had large experience of the goodness, fidelity & power of that allmighty Being who rules in the kingdoms of men, — who is infinitely above the greatest of earthly ~~[illegible]~~ Monarchs, & disposes the affairs of this world as he pleases. He had experienced his protection & Guardianship, & been delivered from dishress & trouble, by the kind & powerful interposition of his Providence. He was eminently qualified therefore to compare the favor & help of God, with that of men, & to determine which was best, or of the greatest importance, — in which persons might with most safety, put their trust & confidence.
And with such experience he declares in the 8th It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in Princes. By man here, he may intend mankind in general; including even those

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who are most kind, benevolent & friendly;
And by Princes, those in higher Stations
of life who may be supposed to have more
ability & power than others to assist and
benefit their fellow-mortals. And as
to both he declares, it is better to trust
in the Lord than to put confidence in
these. And he appears to deliver this
as a general truth, applicable not only
to himself, but to others. And it is a truth
every one ought to be fully perswaded of,
& to act under its influence.

But in discoursing further on the Pt, my
design is, to consider and shew,

I. What may be implied in trusting in
the Lord. And then to shew

II. That this is better than to put confi-
-dence in men, — even the greatest of
men.

I. What may be implyed in trusting in
the Lord? Now, what is directly &
especially meant by trust in God, seems to
be this, our confiding in, & depending upon
him as an almighty & gracious Friend, &
expecting good from him. But then, this

4. dependence & expectation of good, Supposes Several things, as a necessary foundation thereof, which ought to be particularly considered. Trust in God, implies

1. A firm belief of his Being, perfections and ~~Pow~~ governing Providence.

Without the Belief of the being or existence of God, there can be no Such thing as trust in him, or the exercise of any religious disposition or affection toward him. - no ground of prayer, or expectation of good from him; - agreeable to that Heb. 11. 6. — He that cometh unto God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

And trust in God, Supposes not only a belief of his Existence but of his being possessed of those Excellencies & perfections which are a proper foundation of confidence in him, - Such as knowledge, - wisdom, - power & goodness. - A belief that he knows our circumstances & wants, - that he has understanding and wisdom to contrive for our help — that he has goodness to dispose & incline him to be friend & assist us, and power to execute his benevolent

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purposes. The least attention will satisfy us, that a belief of these perfections in God is necessary as a foundation of our confidence in him. If we believe him knowing and powerful, but without benevolence, & disposed to do us evil instead of good, we shall then fear & dread him, in proportion to our apprehensions of his ability to do us hurt. And if we believe him kindly disposed towards us, but ignorant & weak, & unable to do us good, we can have no confidence in him, nor hope from him. But when we believe that God is possessed of knowledge & wisdom, — of benevolence & power, yea, that he has these perfections in an infinite degree, these form a compleat character, as an Object of our trust & confidence. But then one thing more seems still necessarily supposed as a foundation of our trust in God, and that is a belief in his Providence — a belief that he is the great & Supreme Ruler of the world, and that all things in it are under his inspection, controul & Government — that he is not an idle Spectator of what passes in the world, but, as the great Parent of the universe, sets at the head

6. of universal nature, disposing & govern-
-ing all things according to his pleasure.-
This is agreeable to the Char.r we have of God.
The Lord hath prepared his Throne in the hea-
vens (S. Psl.) and his kingdom ruleth
over all. Psm 103. 19. And again Psm
135. 5, 6. I know that the Lord is great,
and that our Lord is above all Gods.
Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he
in heaven and in Earth, in the Seas, and
in all deep places.

But, althô in the view we have now ta-
-ken of the Supreme & all-perfect being, he
is manifestly represented as a proper ob-
-ject of trust & confidence for rational
creatures, yet it is not to be sup-
-pos'd that every one has reason to expect
his special favor & blessing, and that
his parr.r desires shall be gratified.
For, it is supposable, that God, as the com-
-mon Parent of the universe, has regard
to the whole, and that his administration
of Government, are calculated to promote
the common & highest good of the universal
System: In consequence of which, some

individuals, & even of a moral nature, may be disappointed in ye. parr. hopes & & expectations from him, as to this Life.

It is also to be observed, that God is possessed of a moral Charr.; — He is a God of truth, & without Iniquity; just & right is he. From the essential perfections of his nature, he necessarily hates Sin, & loves holiness.

And it is, as possessed of this moral Charr., that he is to be conceived of as ye Governor of men, who are capable of moral conduct; and as disposing of yr. circumstances and conditions. —

It is farther to be observed, — That what might be justly concluded from the moral nature of God, he hath fully declared in that divine Revelation he hath given us, that virtue & happiness, — or obedience to him, & his peculiar & Special favor, are connected together. —

From these things it follows, that in order to Gods being a proper object of trust & confidence for rational & moral creatures, — and for their expecting his Special favor & blessing, there must be in them a conformity to his holy nature & will.

8. All wickedness must be an abomination unto him, & he must necessarily hate the workers of Iniquity, as such; while he beholds the good & virtuous, with complacency and delight. This is agreeable to what we frequently meet with in the Sacred oracles. Thus in 11th Psm — The Eyes of the Lord behold, & his Eye-lids try the children of men. The Lord trieth the righ: but the wicked & him that doth violence, his Soul hateth. Upon the wicked he shall rain Snares, fire & brimstone, & an horrible tempest — For the righ: Lord loveth Righ:s, his countenance doth behold the upright. And again Psm 34. 15 vor. The Eyes of the Lord, are upon the righ: and his Ears are open unto their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the Earth. The righ: cry, and the Lord heareth, & delivereth them out of all their troubles.

Considering therefore the moral nature of God, — his hatred of Sin, & love of holiness — his displeasure towards the wicked, & favourable Regards for ye righteous,

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trust in God may imply

2. Persons being persuaded, in some good measure, that they are possessed of that religious & virtuous Char.r with which his Special favor is connected.

Men can have no just ground to trust in God, as their almighty & gracious Friend, & to expect Special Blessings from him, while they have reason to look upon him as justly offended with them, & to look upon themselves as exposed to his righteous anger:— Not therefore, so long as they are in a State of known, & wilful Rebellion against him. So long as y.r hearts reproach them of their crimes, and they have the galling remembrance of guilt unrepented off, this will preclude confidence in God, & naturally produce distrust and fear. But when persons are not conscious of indulging themselves in any evil way, or of deliberate & allowed transgressions of God's Sacred Laws,

10. then have they reason to ~~hop~~ de-
-pend on his Special favor thrô Jesus
Christ, & ground to put their trust in him
This is agreeable to that of the Apos.
1. Jn.° 3. 21. Beloved, if our heart con-
-demn us not, then have we confidence
towards God.
This trust in God implies therefore, that
men Sincerely repent of y.r past Sins, and
heartily forsake them:— that they amend
their evil ways, and reform what has
been amiss, & offensive in the Sight of
God. It implies that they return unto y.e
Lord from their Iniquities;— that they de-
-vote themselves to him as their rightful
Sovereign, & make it their Sincere and
upright endeavour to obey & Serve him.
It is with Such a Char.r as this, that the for-
-givness and favor of God are evidently
connected. Thus God Speaks to a Sinful peo-
-ple by the Prophet Is.h 1. 16 & on. Wash ye
make you clean. Put away the evil of your
doings from before mine eyes. cease to do evil
learn to do well — come now & let us reaso-

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together, saith the Lord, thô your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow &c
And again Chap. 55. 7. Let the wicked forsake his way, & the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord & he will have mercy upon him, & to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Agreeable to these divine declarations, trust in God, seems sometimes to be limited to persons of a religious & virtuous Char.r hence we meet with such exhortations as these in Sacred Scripture — Let them that fear the Lord, trust in him, he is their help & their Shield. And he that fear-eth the Lord, & obeyeth the voice of his Servant, thô he walk in darkness & have no light, i.e. is surrounded with outward dislefs & trouble, yet he is exhorted to trust in the Lord, & stay himself upon his God Isa.h 50. 10.

And now, agreeable to that religious Char.r I have just been describing, trust in God may imply,

3. Persons depending upon him above every thing else, & as distinguished from every

other cause of good, & seeking his fa-
-vor and blessing.
And this is both the duty & priviledge
of the pious & virtuous. It is their duty,
as by such reliance upon God, & applica-
-tion to him for needed Blessings, they
honor & glorify him, as the great, and
wise & benevolent Ruler of ye world.
This is also their priviledge, as it leads to y^e
ease & quiet, - to the support & comfort of y^r
own minds. Nothing surely can serve so
well, to produce serenity & calmness in a
man's mind, & to support & comfort him
in worldly difficulty & distress, as a firm
trust in God, from a persuasion that he per-
-fectly knows his circumstances & wants, -
and that ~~he is under the wise~~ all Events
relating to him, are under the govern-
-ment of that all-wise & gracious & all-
-mighty Being, who knows, & is ready to
do what is best for him, - and the Liberty
of going to him as to a kind & compassi-
-onate Father, to seek relief & help.
This must soothe, & calm the troubled mind,
& give it quietness & peace. This happy

fruit of trusting in God, the Prophet Isaiah thus describes Chap. 36. 3. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. And the godly will not fail of improving this priveledge of waiting upon God, especially in seasons of affliction & distress, & seeking his gracious help. While they trust in him, as the Supreme Ruler of the world, - as their reconciled God, & gracious & almighty Friend, they will repair to him in their distresses; - they will look above, & beyond all second causes, and supplicate the favor of him who is higher than the highest; and whose Dominion reaeth over all. This we find thus exemplified in the conduct of pious David 2. Sam. 22. 2 &on And he said, the Lord is my Rock, & my fortress, & my Deliverer. The God of my Rock in him will I trust: he is my Shield & the horn of my Salvation; my high Tower & my refuge, my Saviour; thou savest me from violence. I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, So shall I be saved from mine enemies. When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid. The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me. In my distress I called upon the Lord, & cried to my God

11. and he did hear my voice out of his Temple, & my cry did enter into his ears.

But this time that I attempt to shew,

II. That it is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in in men, — even the greatest of men.

It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man (J. Pot) — than to put confidence in Princes.

We are so related to, and connected with those of our own Species; and have necessarily so much concern with one another, that we are naturally led to have some confidence in, & dependence upon each other. And something of this is, no doubt just and allowable: But then, it should allways be in subordination to ye will of that Supreme Being, in whose hand, & under whose Government, we & all things are. And in many cases we find by experience, that our trust in men is vain, & our Expectations of good from them must fail. In some Exigencies they cannot help us, be they ever so well disposed in

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others they may deceive us, & disappoint
our hopes from them; and in all cases, it
may be truly said, it is better to trust in
the Lord, than to put confidence in men, for
~~several reasons~~. Because,

God is more able & ready to help us, and
to answer all our reasonable expectations.
There are many circumstances in life, in
which we may be placed, & many difficulties & distresses to which we may be exposed, in from which none of our fellow-
creatures can effectually deliver us.
Are they great & powerful, & hold y^r rank
among the Princes of the Earth, and are
they ever so well affected towards us, & inclined
to do us good, yet they may want ~~wisdom~~
knowledge & wisdom to contrive for our
relief, & ability to accomplish their benevolent wishes & desires. But God is infinitely wise, as well as good, & nothing
can resist his power. Behold I am ye Lord
(J. h.) the God of all flesh: is there any thing
too hard for me? Jer^h 32.27. God is able
& ready to do every thing for his servants
which he sees will be for the best, and no-
thing can stop or hinder him in his purposes & designs. Again

16. If men have power or ability to assist & help us, yet our trust in them may be vain. ~~In~~ While we take them for Friends, they may prove our Enemies. — be deceitful and treacherous, & in stead of seeking our welfare, lay Schemes for our hurt. They may be unreasonably prejudiced against us; or a love to themselves or to others, may lead them to oppress & injure us, in stead of doing us good. And when men are thus evilly affected towards us, the more powerful they are the less reason have we to expect good, and the greater reason to fear evil from them. Great men & Princes of that character are no more to be trusted in than others, but their power is more to be dreaded.

Now, the great Ruler of the world, is subject to none of these passions & imperfections. He is a God of truth, and without Iniquity, just & right is he. It is said of God that he is no respecter of persons. He is not capricious, arbitrary or tyrannical. He is not influenced by flattery, nor can he be bribed

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into that which is wrong. His Servants may fully depend on his truth & faithfulness, & safely commit y^m: to his divine care and patronage. He is able also to save & deliver them from the injurious designs of their Enemies. He can turn ye counsel even of Ahithophel into foolishness, and blast the Schemes of the most politic, crafty & designing. Thus it is said of God Job. 5.12,13. He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform y^r. enterprize. He taketh the wise in y^r. own craftiness, and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong. Again.

It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man, on account of his unchangeable & eternal Existence.
Let men be ever so kind & gracious towards us, & able to do us good, yet our dependence upon them is precarious, & all our hopes from them may suddenly fail. They are frail & mortal. Our most benevolent friends are so, as well as others, & death may unexpectedly put it out of y^r. power to serve us. Even Princes, — the great & mighty, who are sometimes called Gods, must die like other men & the hopes of those that trust in y^m must fail. But God is not liable to such a change

18. He is the living God. He is from everlast-ing, & will continue to everlasting, — The almighty & gracious friend of his people, & will never fail those, who put yr trust in him. Upon such a view of frail mortal men, & of the immortal, unchangeable God, thus the Pst thus speaks, & teaches us that it is better to trust in ye Lord, than to put confidence in men. Psm 146. 3, 4, 5. Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the Son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thots perish. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.

And this immortal & unchangeable nature of God, is, as to the right—, the sure foundation of yr confidence in him, & of yr hopes of future & eternal good. For yy may not only depend on his care & kindness towards them in this life, but he has made to yms many great & precious promises respecting a future State, and they may safely rely on his goodness & power, — his truth & faithfulness, for the fulfillment of those. He is not a man that he should lie, nor ye Son of man, that he should repent, nor will any change, like death, ever put it out of his power, to make good his word. And

this is now the Support of ye pious Soul, who trusteth in God,— his Support & comfort under all outward difficulties & distresses in the present State. When things look dark about him here, he can look forward to a better State, & still rejoice in God, as his God & portion. *Improvement*

1. We may be cautioned, by what we have heard, against an unbecoming trust and confidence in man.

I mean not to suggest here, that we are in no case, or in any degree to have dependence on one another. It was a State of uncommon degeneracy among the Jews, & w^t we may hope will seldom or never be the gen^l Char^r of a Christian people, when these warnings were delivered. Jer^h 9.4,5. Take heed every one of his neighbour, & trust ye not in any brother: for every Brother will utterly supplant, & every neighbour will walk with Slanders. And they will deceive every one his neighbour, & will not Speak the truth &c Men could scarcely subsist, as Societies, or have any intercourse with one another, without some trust & confidence in each other. But then we may well be cautioned against depending too much, or too entirely, and absolutely upon men. By this we

20. may not only dishonor & offend God, the Supreme Ruler of the world, & Sove-reign disposer of our circumstances, but bring great evils & inconveniences upon ourselves. It becomes us to be allways Sen-sible of the divine Governm.t both over ourselves & others, & to depend upon nothing in this world of changes, but with Sub-mission to the will of heaven.

And it may very ill-become us, as endowed with wisdom & prudence, & being, in some mea-sure, betrusted ~~we~~ by God, with our own hap-piness, to shew much confidence in some par.r men, let y.r rank in life, or pretensions to friendship be w.t yy will. If we have rea-son to suspect y.rs of injurious designs, it be-comes us, as men, to be upon our guard, & not by putting our Interests too much into y.r hands to give y.m opportunity & power to do wicke-d by injuring of us. While we give fear, honor, & tribute to whom these are due, we may lawfully, & it becomes us as reasonable Beings, to guard against impositions, & in-croachments on our just rights, & not still to confide implicitly in those, who, we are per-suaded, would inslave or ruine us. But

2. Let what we have heard fill us with ad-miring & adoring apprehensions of y.e great God. How wonderful is that Being, who ~~perfectly sees~~ has a full & perfect know-

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-ledge of the State & circumstances of all
[illegible] Who presides over the

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And it may very ill-become us, as indowed with wisdom & prudence, & as being, in some measure, betrusted by God, with our own happiness, to place much confidence in some tho' of high Rank & Char.r & full of Professions of Friendship for us. especially if we have reason to suspect them of ill Designs towards us. It may be dangerous to put, or to leave our Interests much in their hands, when we see them making Incroachments upon us, & aiming to sieze our just Rights, as a prey to themselves.

It must be wisdom to withdraw our Confidence from such, & to stand upon our Guard. — Thus have these American States conducted with respect to the british king and Parliament, & the experience we have now had, of their despo-

this, my hearers, [illegible]
concern of us all, rightly to trust in God. We can have no reasonable doubt but he is able to help us under all difficulties, & to de-liver us out of all perplexity & distress,

20. may not only dishonor & offend God, the Supreme Ruler of the world & Sove-
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to confide implicitly in ..., who, we are per-
-suaded, would inslave or ruine us. But

-tive arbitrary, & oppressive Designs against us, must more than jus- -tify the reasonableness & wisdom of such a Conduct.

By asserting our Freedom, & Stand- -ing up in defence of our invaded Rights & priviledges, we are plung'd indeed, into many present Diffe- -culties, yet a merciful God, not- -withstanding our offences against him, has hitherto supported us, & we have still reason to say - It is better to trust in him for Pro- -tection & Safty, than to put confi- -dence in such men & Princes, as would oppress & enslave us.

/ But there is another kind of Confidence in man against which we should be cautiond.

Our Prospects have been somewhat gloomy of late, but they now

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2. Let what we have heard fill us with ad- -miring & adoring apprehensions of ye great God. How wonderful is that Being, who ~~perfectly knows~~ has a full & perfect know-

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brighten upon us, & our hopes revive. A large Army collected & collecting, and great assistance from a powerful Ally are favourable Circumstances, & seem to promise important Success against our Enemies, if not a speedy & happy period to our troubles. It is rational & just that we should be encouraged from these things. But then, we are not to place our Confidence & hopes in an Arm of Flesh. Our Troops are but means & Instruments, and they are in the hand of God, whose is the power & the Victory. The End of this important Struggle is yet uncertain. It is with the great Ruler of the world, to succeed or blast us in all our Enterprizes. We are therefore still to look unto him, as that allmighty Being, upon whose

[illegible] concern of us all, rightly to trust in God. We can have no reasonable doubt but he is able to help us under all difficulties, & to deliver us out of all perplexity & distress,

20. may not only dishonor & offend God, the Supreme Ruler of the world & Sove-

favor all our Success and happiness depend. And 2.y

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Suaded, would enslave or ruine [illegible]

2. Let what we have heard fill us with admiring & adoring apprehensions of a great God. How wonderful is that Being, who ~~[illegible]~~ has a full & perfect know

- ledge of the State & circumstances of all created things? — Who presides over the universe & disposes & governs all things according to his pleasure? — Who can make what changes & revolutions he pleases in the greatest States & kingdoms of this world? — Who can easily disconcert ye Schemes, & baffle the designs of ye most subtil & crafty of the children of men; & protect his Servants against all the machinations of y^r Enemies, & save y^m out of all y^r troubles? Surely it becomes us to think of this great & glorious Being with the highest Reverence — to fear his awful displeasure, — to value his favor, & to give him that honor & praise which is due to his infinite majesty. How wretched must be the State of such as are exposed to the angry resentments of this almighty Being! How happy the State of those who are ye favourites of this God of Heaven & earth, & are able upon just Grounds, to put their trust & confidence in him! And

3. Be this, my hearers, the par^r & great concern of us all, rightly to trust in God. We can have no reasonable doubt but he is able to help us under all difficulties, & to deliver us out of all perplexity & distress,

22. ~~if he see fit~~ and to bestow upon us every desirable favor & blessing, if he see fit. And then have we reason to hope for his favor, & gracious appearance for us, when we rightly trust in him. But let us call to mind what is implyed in this. Let us call to mind the moral char^r of God. Consider that he is holy, as well as wise, & great & powerful. - That he hates sin, & is angry wth the wicked, while his countenance beholds the upright, & he hears the cry of the right^s. Let it be our concern therefore that we are thus prepared to trust in God & to hope for his mercy. - That we all sincerely repent of our sins, & heartily forsake every evil way, & devote ourselves to obey & serve God.

Was this our gen^l Char^r, as a people, thro' this Land, then might we trust in God, wth a filial confidence, & still hope that he would ~~still~~ be our God, & our Sav^r. - That he would hear the prayers of his people under y^r present fears & displeasures, and over-rule things favourably for them. - that he would remove from us the tokens of his anger, & cause his face to shine upon us. Let us all aim then, at this Reformation in ourselves, by putting away ye evil of our doings, - by ceasing to do evil &

learning to do well.— Let us pray for this Reformation, & endeavour to promote it in others, & thus seek the favor of that infinite Being who loves righteousness & hates Iniquity.

And let us, my hearers, be excited to repentence & holiness, not only by the hope of temporal favour & blessings, but of future & eternal ones. This is the way, & the only way, in which we may hope for the forgiveness of our sins, & for eternal life by Jesus Christ,— in which we may trust in God, as our reconciled God & Father, & expect the Blessings of his heavenly kingdom.

And O, let none of us despise & neglect blessings of such infinite value & importance! How must the hope of these diffuse joy & gladness thro' our souls!— How must it support & comfort us, amidst all the troubles & distresses of this present world?

God grant that this may be our consolation here, and that whatever may befall us in the present world, we may have admission into those peaceful & happy mansions which our gracious Redeemer hath prepared for all his faithful followers— Amen—

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Pm 8d

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G. 38. 13

Trust in God, better than Confidence in men

A Discource on Pm 118. 8, 9.

On a Day of fasting & prayer occassonid by our public Diffeculties

Delivered July 14. 1774.

Rev John Tucker D. D.

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